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WORLD ORDER

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LIFE AND DEATH

THE two most important events of life are the coming into it and the final departure from it. In regard to both of these events religion has much to say. For the child beginning its life-journey religion offers a purpose and a plan. It is the ultimate duty of parents to train their children in the knowledge and fear of God, and in devotion to His commandments and institutions as revealed in His Holy Word. As regards death, religion again has something of the utmost importance to say. It assures us that individuality continues beyond the grave: that the next life, if we have lived well here, is more glorious than this; and that the success and quality of life over there depends very much upon the spiritual success and quality of the life we spend here.

It is the function of religion to assume authority at these two goal-posts of our earthly career. But it happens that today formal religion woefully flags in these responsibilities. It is not the cause, to any prevalent degree, of the moral and spiritual training of youth; and its influence over human attitudes toward death has greatly fallen from the high estate achieved in the halcyon days of Christianity.

That glowing faith in the next life which characterized early Christianity and was one of the chief causes of its exuberant success among pagan peoples deprived of such a faith—this faith has almost vanished from the psychology of modern intellectuals. Death is again viewed, as among ancient pagans, as a misfortune to be apprehended: as furnishing but a meager exchange of dubious existence somewhere for solid and enjoyable existence here.

The plain truth of the matter is, that institutional religion today has lost not only its grip on life but its grip on death also. Funerals are mournful things, lacking the paeans with which the Apostolic Church celebrated the passing of an earth-bound soul to the Glory of the Beyond-world.

In contrast to this decadent and languishing attitude of modern Christianity is the strong and vibrant faith of Bahá'ís—a faith based upon vivid and definite assurance proceeding by

means of Revelation itself from the Great Knower of all things.

Bahá'ís believe that life over there is poignantly beautiful and inspiring for those souls who pass into the Great Beyond spiritually prepared and qualified to enjoy its activities and delights. They are taught that its glories are purposely concealed from us lest they interfere with our contentment here by their too dazzling rivalry with our humdrum, obstacled, and over-wearied life upon this planet. They believe that their relatives or friends who have died in the knowledge and love of God are ushered into a glorious and truly enviable existence. Thus once again "death hath lost its sting and the grave its victory." A Bahá'í funeral is what the celebration of life's final event ought to be, a ceremony of transfiguration infinitely uplifting and exalting.

S.C.

Know thou that the soul of man is exalted above, and is independent of all infirmities of body or mind. That a sick person showeth signs of weakness is due to the hindrances that interpose themselves between his soul and his body, for the soul itself remaineth unaffected by any bodily ailments. Consider the light of the lamp. Though an external object may interfere with its radiance, the light itself continueth to shine with undiminished power. In like manner, every malady afflicting the body of man is an impediment that preventeth the soul from manifesting its inherent might and power. When it leaveth the body, however, it will evince such ascendency, and reveal such influence as no force on earth can equal. Every pure, every refined and sanctified soul will be endowed with tremendous power, and shall rejoice with exceeding gladness.—BAHÁ'U'LLÁH.

CONSTRUCTIVE RELIGION

A. G. B.

THAT mankind should attain its majority, that history should be crowned by a Golden Age when a great spiritual Teacher would arise and found a universal religion that would flower in a universal civilization, is the common predication of the World Faiths from the beginning.

The supreme prophets of mankind have appeared in lands separated by thousands of miles: in India and China and Palestine and Persia and Arabia and elsewhere. They have appeared in periods separated by thousands of years: Muhammad in 7th century A. D. described himself as the Seal of a prophetic line which is stated in the Bible to reach back to the beginning of the world. They gave revelations which differed widely in degree and in range. But all alike encouraged in mankind a forward looking attitude of hope and a belief in an informing destiny towards which all the movements of history were being directed by God.

The witness of each to this consummation was independent and original. No one who studied the ancient record or tradition would conclude that Jesus gathered the idea from Buddha or Confucius, or Confucius from Zarathustra or from any other Prophet. Each evidently spoke out of his own immediate and certain knowledge, as if to him (being a Seer) Eternity had already unfolded in the present what time would unfold to others in the future. He gave his forecast from his own particular point of view and with his own particular emphasis. But it was always a prediction of one and the same historical event; and this consensus of foreknowledge forms one of the indications that all the Founders of the World Faiths shared a common purpose and were working towards a single end. However different their revelations, the religion they taught was fundamentally one, the law which they unfolded was one, the objective towards which they worked was one.

The impression which this prophecy has made on the imagination of humanity has been deep and lasting. It has never wholly faded from men's minds, and during recent decades it has been brought strongly back to the

recollection of followers or students of many faiths, all the world over.

A publication of the Confucian Association of New York in 1928 entitled "Confucianism for World Peace" includes the statement that "with a view to enlightening future generations Confucius wrote a most important book entitled 'The Spring and Autumn' which is now the foremost book of all Chinese Classics, dealing with international problems, codifying international laws and promoting permanent international peace.

"Universal peace was the goal of Confucius. He divided the period of history mentioned in his book 'The Spring and Autumn' into three stages, namely, the Stage of Disorder, the Advancement of Peace, and the Perfect Peace.

"In the first stage, the Stage of Disorder, primitive civilization was being evolved out of chaos and the social mind was still very rude. . . . In the second stage, the Advancement of Peace, there was a distinction between all civilized countries and those of the barbarians; the limit of civilization became broader and the friendship of nations closer. Those smaller nations could make their voices heard. In the third stage, the Perfect Peace, there was no distinction at all. The barbarians became civilized and had the same standing as any other people in the family of nations. The whole world became one unit. Righteousness prevailed."

A High Priest of the Parsis, N. B. Dhalla, in a work called by the hopeful title "Our Perfecting World," shows how modern progress has vindicated the philosophy of history set forth by Zarathustra long ages since. "We hope to show," he writes, "that our universe is unfolding towards an aim and that the life of man imperfect in all its phases has throughout the period of human history been slowly but steadily progressing towards perfection through the inexorable laws of cooperation with good and conflict with evil, which is the message of hope Zarathustra brings to mankind."

Buddha gave to his Movement not more than a thousand years of creative effort; or even half that time; but we are told "that a Buddha named Metteyya should in the fullness of time arise is recorded in the Canon as a prophecy made by Gotama himself." Commenting on this a leading authority writes—

"When we watch the way in which Gotama Buddha and his followers met the errors and problems of their own day, recasting it may be a yet more ancient body of doctrine to cope with present needs, can we doubt that if a Metteyya Buddha arose here and now he would recast their Dhamma and instead of making converts to a Norm adapted to bygone conditions would evolve with travail of soul a gospel and a philosophy built out of the knowledge and needs of today?"[1]

THE predictions contained in the Old Testament, in the Gospels, and in the Book of Revelation, with the still more specific particulars given by Muhammad in the Qur'an or attributed to him by tradition, have been kept prominently before the public in Christendom and in Islam

1—Mrs. Rhys Davis, Buddhism.

for many years.

It is certainly more easy for the modern citizen of the world to comprehend the principles and the reality of these prophecies than it was for men in former centuries. Long ago the faithful to whom this teaching was addressed accepted it wholeheartedly as true because it was revealed by the spokesman of God. It spread before them a noble ideal of God's power and of man's brotherliness, and they were spiritual enough to receive it with joy and to transmit it as a legacy of hope that would bring happiness to posterity. But they were in no position to visualize its full and literal accomplishment. They had no knowledge of the vastness of the earth and the number and variety of its inhabitants. They could not foresee how much mankind would have to learn before such a consummation became practicable. With such primitive means of locomotion and communication as were at their disposal they could scarcely imagine that a world-parliament or any form of world-administration would ever be made a working actuality.

We now occupy a position very different indeed. We are the heirs of the ages. We have reached the apex of history. World conditions are ripe for the integration of a universal economy, and all the apparatus for the purpose is to our hand. The whole earth has been explored and its peoples brought into close touch with one another. International organizations of all sorts, including a League of Nations, have been created; and statesmen are busy on the task of promoting a further coordination of world-affairs.

But though the material developments so long foretold have taken shape before our eyes at last, the hopeful heavenward attitude of soul which the Prophets sought to establish has not accompanied it. The simple faith with which the prophecy was received and transmitted is not in evidence now when the prophecy has been fulfilled. The world situation which has been continuously taking shape for many years has not at any point been approached as primarily a spiritual phenomenon. It has not been and is not today being studied from the spiritual point of view as the handiwork of a beneficent God, the normal climax of an historical process outlined for our instruction by spiritual men long ages ago. Men have not sought first to discover and to do God's will nor have they asked before all else for guidance from His wisdom.

MEN's unspiritual attitude in so grave a crisis and their inability to identify the long heralded Event is indeed a strange phenomenon. It becomes more strange when it is remembered that Christ many times with earnest solicitation warned men against their being taken unawares by the advent of the Day of God and bade them, one and all, "Watch." But however strange it be the fact remains that the nations have taken the crisis in hand as a many-sided but merely secular problem. They trusted to their own ability to rationalize life in a manner suitable to modern requirements. They were confident they could plan such structural changes as

would meet all demands. Organized religion on its part took no initiative in developing group consciousness into world-consciousness. The united moral and spiritual support of mankind was not secured nor asked for in support of the young League of Nations. No effort was made to found a League of Religions; nor did any one of the world-faiths succeed in concentrating the spiritual energies of all its members on the promotion everywhere of harmony and goodwill. The task of unifying mankind and of building a world order was taken in hand by secularists, statesmen, scientists, economists. None acted as remembering that the New Age was to be a New Dispensation; that it was to have its particular Prophet, and that its outstanding distinction was not to be merely its material extent but principally its spiritual character.

The world-imbroglio imperfectly understood and superficially analyzed refused to yield to the treatment given to it. Men could not discover what was their mistake. They were frustrated in every endeavor but they could not tell why. Persisting in their unspiritual frame of mind they could find no remedy for the ills of the time. At last they concluded that no remedy existed and resorted to measures of desperation.

Yet the nature of the error that had been made and that was the one sufficient cause of all failures is written plain in the lessons of history. The precedents of former epochs show that to attempt to build a better world on a non-spiritual foundation is to challenge the counsels of experience. To discard the aid of religion in constructing a new civilization is to reject one of the mightiest instruments of human progress. Down the ages, religion has proved itself a major influence in the integration and remodelling of the social order. The greatest civilizations have been based on the rock of religious faith. Each was inaugurated by the power of a spiritual teacher and is known to history by his name. Those who gave to humanity its religion are likewise the authors of its social progress and the inspirers of its culture. Many influences have strengthened men's tendency to form themselves into larger and larger groups, (to let the family or clan pass into the city, state or principality, and this again into the nation, and this into a commonwealth of nations), but no influence has been stronger than the sympathetic bond of a common faith. The records of the past indicate that it is easier for peoples to bridge differences of ancestry or culture or language than differences of belief. Social discontent may be held in check and the disruption of society prevented so long as men share the same faith; and no feature in the present European crisis is more sinister than the fact that for the first time in fifteen hundred years this common bond has been lost. Again and again in history religion has awakened in strange and alien peoples a sense of brotherhood and has brought diverse nations together into one and the same fold. It has shown itself to conduce to the healing of discords, the soothing of sedition and the preservation of discipline. It has been cherished by wise rulers; and the most cynical as well as the most enlight-

ened have acknowledged its salutary influence.

To lay aside the use of this vital constructive power and to undertake to handle such a crisis as the present without the aid of religion is to fly in the face of the experience and the wisdom of the past and to be guilty of an act which has the appearance of complete infatuation. For even if men postpone the creation of a comprehensive world order, the immediate and primary enterprise of uniting all nations for the effective prohibition of war will tax every human resource and faculty to the uttermost. Without the vigorous use of all moral and spiritual energies (as well as the merely intellectual energies) the task can in the nature of things never be carried through. The stirring to new life of mankind's higher susceptibilities and the re-awakening of compassion and goodwill in the human heart, constitute the essential need of the hour: and this can only be accomplished by such an immense religious impulse as was brought into the world in the early days of Islam or of Christianity.

WHENCE will such a religion arise and in what direction shall men look for it? Will it grow of itself in the soil of men's hearts—will it be invented—be pieced together out of the teaching of those ancient faiths that men have distorted to their own fancy and no longer obey?

Would those great truths which have held the West in awe for 1900 years ever have availed but for the power of the Christ? Would the Four Noble Truths have had many students or the Eightfold Paths many followers but for the charm and the inspiration of the Buddha? Would the history of China from 700 B. C. have taken the shape it did and set long ago so illustrious an example to mankind but for the radiant force of Confucius himself? No spiritual mind would suppose that God who in times of darkness has hitherto sent to mankind His Light-bearers will desert humanity now. Nor that He will abandon His unvarying method of self-revelation. Nor that those mighty minds of old, those spokesmen of His Purpose, were mistaken when they foretold the development of such a World-Age as this and the Advent of a Master Spirit to teach and guide and lead the way.

Historically a new revelation is not given nor a new religion established save through the mediation of a Great Soul who claims for himself the authority of a spokesman of Truth and becomes the overlord and directing genius of a Dispensation. If we are to trust the clear witness of the Past, the deepest needs of men today cannot be met nor this frustration ended save by the arising of such a Master Prophet to become the world center of a common devotion and the architect of a new world order. Not theories, nor precepts, nor plans will bring deliverance to man; but the inspiration of a Leader endued with such beauty of character that he will win the love of all human hearts and with such spiritual power that he can overcome the unruly wills of men and unite all in a common obedience.

The supremacy of one who founded a Prophetic Era is a unique phenomenon worthy at all times of profound

contemplation. But it never demands such earnest attention as in an hour like the present when the re-appearance of a High Prophet affords the nations their only hope of deliverance and security.

In its origin and its nature, in its geographical extent and its temporal duration, in the course of its progress and the manner of its exercise it is different from any other dominion shown forth in history. It is won by means wholly different from those resorted to by an earthly sovereign or conqueror; it is based upon a different foundation, is built throughout of different materials, and it attains a completeness and perfection which cannot even be distantly approached by the utmost rigor of legal restraint or of physical force. It is possessed of a unique vitality. Treachery cannot destroy it. It grows through opposition and it is re-animated through persecution. The energies which it manifests in governing the children of men and the responsive effort which it draws forth from them are alike unparalleled in human relations. In distant ages when travel and communication were difficult and hazardous the great world-faiths whether from India or Arabia, from Persia or from Palestine spread their influence far across desert and mountain and brought alien and widely separated nations and races into the fellowship of a single obedience. The domains of Christ and Muhammad reached out over a wider area than the victories of Alexander the Great or the imperial sway of Ancient Rome. Buddha holds to this day one-third of the human race in allegiance to him. Nor is it in extent only but in duration also that the sovereignty of the heavenly Teacher transcends that of the earthly conqueror; for the haughtiest mortal dynasty sinks eclipsed by the quiet power of a Ruler whose dominion counts its age by centuries and millenniums.

So complete is this ascendency that it extends over both social and aesthetic life, touching to new activity, poetry and painting, sculpture and architecture, and remolding institutions, customs and laws. It penetrates the very heart and soul of man, transforming his mental outlook and his ideals, and exerts over him so strange a lordship that he pays the lowliest homage to its dictates and accepts as absolute its imperatives. Nor in this obedience does he find himself the least abased but rather exalted and empowered. For it is religion which inspires his love for beauty, goodness and truth and which is the main support of that principle of justice on which society depends for ordered existence.

We see around us in every continent evidence of the enduring might of the Prophets of the distant past; and the remains of their creative work continues to this day, wonderful even in its age and decay. Throughout the West is spread that proud and opulent civilization which calls itself after the name of the lowly Teacher of Galilee. In Christ's honor we build our shrines and from His simple words we derive our highest ideals of conduct; we live under the protection of institutions and a social system founded and maintained by the impulse of His revelation; and we are nurtured in a culture which owes

whatever is best in it to the inspiration of His genius.

By our side stands another civilization, sunk in decrepitude, which 1,300 years ago arose in an obscure region among backward and savage tribes and spread rapidly across Africa and Asia, stretching from Spain to Tobolsk and Turkestan, uniting diverse peoples under the influence of a single belief and a single law, and establishing a brilliant intellectual culture to which the Christian West owes a debt that it is only now beginning in some degree to understand.

Our Scriptures bear witness to the creative might of the Prophet whom the Lord Christ succeeded and tell of the glory of Moses who took an enslaved and dispirited people, delivered them from their bonds, started them on a career of conquest and welded them into a nation which created its own civilization, made a distinctive contribution to human progress and developed a sense of nationhood so vigorous that the misfortunes of two thousand years have not been able to impair it. And to this day the Hebrew people scattered throughout the globe count the law of Moses more sacred than any other and revere His name above every other name save God's alone.

We turn to India and see there how a great Revelation, or series of Revelations, coming down from a remote and mysterious Past, has built up a social system which after all these centuries remains in essentials unmodified as one of the most enduring fabrics that humanity has ever devised. The religion of India has produced unnumbered saints, sages, warriors and poets. The depth and beauty of its spiritual thought, the richness and the splendor of its achievement in art (in painting, in sculpture, in architecture and in literature) are still the admiration of the scholar and the inspiration of the mystic.

The Mauryan Empire of the Buddhist king Asoka is claimed by historians to be the only instance on record in which a great nation sought to combine in one related system the development of political institutions and the realization of the spiritual life.

In the time of Confucius ten of the leading nations of China held a conference for disarmament. More than two centuries before Christ they had so far realized their Prophet's principles that the component states of their country resigned their independent sovereignty and formed themselves into a single governmental system. And so enduring was this pacific ideal that after more than 2,000 years when the Empire was superseded by a Republic the Emperor of China was the only national monarch who in his full dress carried no sword.

Yet the beneficence of religion as shown in history is but a fragment of what it might have been had men ever in any land wholeheartedly obeyed the revealed will of God and by faithfully keeping the Covenant which the Prophet brought had they earned the prosperity and happiness which was promised by it. But they did not. No Advent has ever been acclaimed by a responsive and grateful generation. The sovereignty of all the Prophets throughout all Dispensations has been

challenged, evaded or openly repudiated, and the religions they taught have been misunderstood, misrepresented, sophisticated and perverted out of recognition. Every such act of disobedience has under the law of compensation entailed the forfeiture of some prospective benefit—of some deliverance from error or misery, of some social amelioration or advance in knowledge. The sum of all these forfeitures is now incalculable and unimaginable by man. But between the lines of human history is written by the finger of the Recording Angel the long sad catalogue of the blessings brought down from heaven by the Prophets to man but foregone through his remissness.

At long last, the human race through the compassion of God and the merit of the Great Souls and true saints who have been the real leaders of mankind has reached the time of its maturity and been brought to the dawn of the promised Day of God. But how different might have been the history of mankind, how continuous and rapid their progress, how happy their lot had they followed with a single heart the teaching of their Prophets and used the constructive potencies of religion to the full.

Somber indeed is the story of cruelty and oppression and war and misery through which man has made his slow and weary way to the height of his present attainment; and its sadness grows deeper when one perceives that the major part of all this toil and suffering was brought down on man by nothing else than his rejection of God's Prophets and his rebellion against God's Teachings.

Never was there in the dark abyss of times gone by an epoch when the inspiration of a divine Messenger was more manifestly needed. Never at the advent of any Prophet—of Muhammad or Christ or Moses or any other—was the human race confronted with difficulties so manifold or dangers so terrible. Never was the futility of man's efforts to attain security more disastrously demonstrated or more despairingly admitted.

The blessed and opportune tidings which the Bahá'ís offer to a world perplexed is that the predictions of all scriptures have now been fulfilled: the ultimate mission of all the great religions has been completed: the time has come under God for the establishment of a universal civilization inaugurated and sustained by a universal religion; and the Leader, the Messenger, the Prophet whom God has appointed to take command of men in this colossal task has appeared in the person of Bahá'u'lláh.

"The Revelation which from time immemorial hath been acclaimed as the Purpose and Promise of all the Prophets of God and the most cherished Desire of His Messengers hath now by virtue of the pervasive will of the Almighty and at His irresistible bidding, been revealed unto men. . . . Great indeed is this Day! The allusions made to it in all the sacred scriptures as the Day of God attest its greatness. The soul of every Prophet of God, of every Divine Messenger, hath thirsted for this wondrous Day. All the divers kindreds of the earth have likewise yearned to attain it."—BAHÁ'U'LLÁH.

THE GARMENT OF JOSEPH

DORIS GOODRICK

THE expression "Joseph's Coat" has been used thoughtlessly by countless thousands; but an insight into this great mystery, as it is revealed by Bahá'u'lláh, will silence us with its sheer beauty and intrigue us with the discovery that we are a Jacob seeking the lost Joseph.

In our lives we play out this great drama, and many allusions to it are found in the writings of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Indeed, it is said that the first book written by the Báb was in explanation of the Sura (or book) of Joseph.

As we are taking the part of one of the principal actors in this spiritual drama, we should not do it blindly but should study our part. We should also study every authentic version of that part. The Christian Bible gives one version, the Muhammadan Qur'an gives another and more complete version. This should be read to enable us to understand the symbology more fully, and that we may comprehend the many references throughout Bahá'u'lláh's writings to the "Fragrance of the Garment."

We will want to know what it is that as Jacobs we are seeking; why it is Joseph who has that for which we weep until our eyes are blinded; and why the brothers were jealous and sold him into exile. Bahá'u'lláh also tells us how Jacob may find his Joseph.

Joseph was a prophet from the line of Abraham, and the garment which he wore was one into which God had woven all of the holy attributes. As Bahá'u'lláh has said, "Know that God has united all the essences and meanings and all attributes and names and explanations in a woven cloth and covered with it that Holy and Divine Person, that he may in that garment represent the Beloved Joseph."

This singling out for favor creates jealousy among the heedless; and throughout countless ages the jealous brethren have been those who violate the Covenant. 'Abdu'l-Bahá says, "The faithful Joseph fell surely into grievious distress through the jealousy of his brethren, who dishonored him; nay, outraged him, and cast him behind their backs and threw him in a dark well; they sold him for a paltry price—for a few pence—returning to

their father at eve weeping, and, with his shirt stained with false blood, they slandered the wolf who was free from blame. The same shall appear from these violaters. Then interpret this vision: How the conduct of these former evil-doers agreeth with the course of the succeeding followers of the great darkness!"

Thus Joseph, through persecution, carried his message into Egypt. Bahá-'u'lláh, in "Seven Valleys," calls this the "Egypt of Love." 'Abdu'l-Bahá speaks of it as the "divine Egypt" and the "Egypt of the love of God." So it is there Joseph must be sought. Of the "Valley of Search" Bahá'u'lláh says, "In this journey the seeker reaches a stage wherein he finds all beings madly in search of the Friend. He will see many a Jacob wandering in quest of Joseph."

In this drama, as told in the Qur'án, we learn that a messenger brings the *inner* garment of Joseph to Jacob, who recognizes it by its fragrance and his sight becomes restored. Here we see that the knowledge of the Manifestation (Joseph) may be brought to us (Jacob) by one who does not himself comprehend it; and that physical separation is no barrier to our search. 'Abdu'l-Bahá explains, "Physical nearness or remoteness is of no importance; the essential fact is the spiritual affinity and ideal nearness. Judas Iscariot was for a long time favored in the holy court of His Holiness Christ, yet he was entirely far and remote: while Paul, the apostle, was in close embrace with His Holiness. The Egyptian carrier of glad-tidings was the bearer of the garment of Joseph; yet he could not inhale the fragrance of the garment. His holiness, Jacob, in Canaan, longed for meeting (Joseph), yet he was near and inhaled the fragrances of the garment. Consequently, it is evident that one can certainly and surely inhale the perfume of affinity even from a far distance."

How shall we recognize this perfume of the garment of our beloved? Bahá'u'lláh says, "Would you attain the Joseph of the Beauty of the Friend, you must needs attain the Egypt of Love; and would you open the inner eye, like Jacob you must sacrifice your outward eyes; and would you commune with the Friend of Ecstasy you must needs burn with the fire of Love."

Can we recognize the Jacobs who have found the lost Joseph? Bahá-'u'lláh says, "Deeds reveal the station of the man." Also Bahá'u'lláh writes, "From My Ordinances emanateth the scent of My Garment, and by them the standards of victory will be hoisted on the tops of mountains and hills. The Tongue of My Might, in the realm of My Greatness, hath addressed My creatures, saying: 'Follow My Ordinances for the Love of My Perfection!' "

THE MASTERY OF SORROW

B. G. CARPENTER

"Away with funeral music, set
The pipes to powerful lips,
Life's for him that drinks,
Not for him that sips."

SORROW is quite a sure portion of every normal life. Some people have a great portion of sorrow; others not so much. Sometimes it comes suddenly with great shock; sometimes it is in the form of a slow development of the sense of failure and loneliness.

But the fact of it in life can not be disputed. Nor should we complain about its being a portion of life. This attitude is due to a lack of careful thinking about life and its meaning. Life without love would be meaningless. No one will question that. And if we have love we must have the possibility of suffering.

If sorrow is a sure portion of life then we should know how to meet it and what to do with it. We should know how to master it and make it minister to the best life of the soul.

Religion should function here. Religion should be "a lift, not a load." Our Beautiful Faith should answer our questions and be a source of power by which we can win the victory over sorrow.

A WRONG ATTITUDE

The fact is that most of the religions of the world have been pessimistic—at least as far as this world is concerned. In an indirect but effective way religion has taught the blessedness of feeling bad, the happiness of wretchedness and misery. People have, in the name of religion, gone about it to devise means of suffering; they have made themselves miserable *thinking thus to make themselves commendable to God.* I know people who actually cultivate sorrow; they increase the natural amount, thinking that there is some credit in that.

THE MASTERY OF SORROW

The first step is, of course, to correct these wrong ways of thinking about the amount, the source of sor-

row and its place in our lives. We do not have to be miserable in order to be good,—do we? Then there is the fact of the over amount of sorrow in the world. There is the great amount of sorrow connected with poverty and war! Does God "send" such sorrow? Certainly not. We create that sorrow. That responsibility is upon us. The plain fact of the matter is that a very large portion of sorrow is unnecessary. We must correct that.

Some time ago I was called into a home where a little boy had passed from this form of life. One of the parents said, "We loved him too much, so God took him away." The fact is that the boy's life was taken in an automobile accident. Have we a right to say, "*God* took him?"

Another very foolish notion is that sorrow is the result of personal sin. Very often we hear people say, "What have I done that God should send this upon me?" It is true that sometimes suffering comes as a consequence of our wrong doing, but not all of sorrow or even a small portion can be explained in that way. I have known some *very* good people who have had a very great deal of sorrow.

Real sorrow is just a natural portion of life; it is a part of the raw material out of which we grow our souls. The question is, What are we going to do with it?

The sanity of our minds, not less than the health of our souls depends upon our being able to answer that question in a satisfactory way. And the people of this fellowship[1] believe that our rational and beautiful faith answers the question and provides the power needed.

In the past humanity has tried many devices whereby to escape these sharp questions that pierce the heart. There was the position taken by the Stoic who said, "Never mind, let us go on our way and not trouble ourselves about these questions." That, of course, is not a solution; it is a *surrender.* If we are going to really live we must face the great questions bravely.

Then there is today the quite popular attitude of the Cynic who says, "It is not worth while to try to be good," "What's the use," etc. This is also a surrender and we must be sure to keep ourselves free from such an attitude of mind and spirit.

Another popular attempt to escape the hard questions of life is by the use of "intellectual narcotics." These people close eyes to all sin, sickness and death. Are they not building "the pretty house of make-believe" in which to sit and dream that the hard questions do not exist? Another way to say it is that this is an attempt to dodge the hard questions of life. Well, we can not dodge them; we must face them.

Our beautiful Faith teaches us that God is good, that His laws are good and that if we learn how to live and obey His laws we have victory.

One man is ruined by a great sorrow, another is lifted up and made better. The key to that better result is the cultivation of a right quality and temper of spirit, the abiding consciousness that we live in a divine order, that "underneath are the everlasting arms." This right quality and temper of spirit is the result of a

great, commanding, life-giving faith in God the Father. Jesus set the example for us when, after He had done all he could, He said, "Father, not my will but Thine be done." This is the attitude of true filial love. And when we are able to take that attitude, cultivate that spirit, then comes peace and the mastery of sorrow.

THE MINISTRY OF SORROW

Pain belongs to the physical body; sorrow belongs to the soul. Sorrow is, therefore, more spiritual than pain, more exalting, more revealing. While we can not fathom all its mystery we can agree that it is not "a cloud over our reason." It illuminates reason and may become a source of insight.

We can spiritualize it, assimilate it and transmute it into character.

Of the qualities which sorrow can, and should, foster in us, let us name three. The first is courage. The brave soul has three chances to one. The body may sicken but the indomitable spirit rides the storm. Who has purged himself from fear can look directly into the fact of life and walk with soul erect and untroubled. And sorrow, met in the right way, with the right spirit, develops courage.

In the second place, sorrow, met in the right way, develops sympathy. To be able to "sit where another sits," see from his point of view and suffer with him, is the perfection of that sweet and healing grace of sympathy. If out of the secretly aching heart there comes the impulse to stretch out a helping hand to another—then another victory is won.

In the third place, as Dr. Newton points out, sorrow if taken aright, has a deep religious mission,—it gives us "the power of insight." This is called "the new dimension of life."

Courage, sympathy, insight: power to endure, a heart to feel and eyes to see,—if sorrow can give us these it has a benign and redeeming ministry to our souls.

"One adequate support
For the calamities of mortal life
Exists,—one only: an assured belief
That the procession of our fate, howe'er
Sad or disturbed, is ordered by a Being
Of Infinite benevolence and power,
Whose everlasting purposes embrace
All calamities, converting them to good."

If we can have a faith like that we can face any sorrow and win the victory. Oddly enough the great sufferers have been, for the most part great believers. With them "pain is a fact in favor of faith." This is the testimony of a host of heroic souls. Great souls do not deny suffering—much less seek it—they master it and make it serve for the enrichment of soul.

1—The writer has for many years served in the ministry of a liberal church in America. In this capacity he is called upon, not only by his own fellowship, but by people of other creeds and of no creed to help them personally in time of trial and to serve them formally in time of death. He asserts that his long experience shows to him that today people are facing calamity with increasing understanding and fortitude.

TRUTH AND MAN

HORACE HOLLEY

THE highest form of human society is that based upon the principle of voluntary cooperation and sustained by a mutual loyalty for the attainment of the general welfare. The lowest type of society is based upon coercion and force, motivated by fear, and made incapable of true progress because divided by suspicion inherently incapable of releasing the spiritual power of enthusiasm and inner fulfilment.

When we apply this truth to present-day civilization throughout the world, we find all too many areas reduced to the level of coercion, too few that permit self-respect and the voluntary cooperation characterizing human beings in a condition of equality. Since, therefore, the quality of the social structure depends ultimately upon the integrity of human character rather than upon formal laws and statutes, it is clear and evident that cooperation cannot be established among the nations, races and classes of earth until men themselves have acquired the necessary spiritual powers.

Long before the atheistic Roman statesman asked the question, What is truth? a greater and more heroic soul in Israel had raised the same question in this significant form: What is man, that Thou art mindful of him?

What is man? Consider the appalling confusion that exists today in all matters of general social policy. Scarcely can two persons be found anywhere to agree fully on a solution of any phase of the world's major problems. That confusion, which binds with heavy chains the struggling body of a suffering mankind, is nothing else than a reflection of the real confusion darkening this age, the ignorance concerning the nature and the possibilities of man. Until we have learned what man is, and what man can be, it is futile to build any social structure upon the shifting sands of ignorance and unbelief.

There could be no more poignant statement on this spiritual condition than these words of the Founder of the Bahá'í Faith: "The vitality of men's belief in God is dying out in every land; nothing short of His wholesome medicine can ever restore

it. The corruption of ungodliness is eating into the vitals of human society; what else but the Elixir of His potent revelation can cleanse and revive it?"

What wonder, then, that so many conscientious persons today long for a return to the simpler age of living faith, when men sincerely believed in such mysteries as the soul, the love of God, the spiritual destiny of the race, and access to a guiding Providence and a sustaining Will?

But between us and that simpler age stands all the vast body of knowledge created by physical science. The telescope plumbed the skies and found no naive, primitive "heaven"; and the microscope probed all matter, including the stuff we are made of, and found no organ or visible instrument of the soul. Therefore a generation arose which felt it had to choose between faith and reason, between hope and truth—and it turned away from the convictions of the simpler age.

THE Bahá'í teachings meet this supreme issue squarely. They reestablish the foundation of hope and faith, not by denying or neglecting the particular truths of science, but by carrying the scientific attitude forward and onward to deal with a higher order of truth. Their purpose is to identify faith not with credulity but with conscious knowledge.

The true scientist does not form his opinion until he has considered all the relevant facts. If a certain law is formulated, and then new facts appear which obviously contradict the law, he knows that it is not a scientific law but only an opinion, and he takes up the problem afresh. In dealing with the facts concerning the nature of man, the true scientist would not, for example, base his conclusion merely upon a study of infants and children, excluding all adults. Neither would he confine his study to the people of any one social class, or nationality, or race. No—if we are to accept as laws any formulas advanced concerning the nature of man, we must certainly, and above all, include in our range of vision those who are the true and chosen leaders of humanity, the seers and prophets, who in their moral and ethical qualities are the most perfect of human beings. We must also include in our vision that vast realm of historic truth which makes it so evident that these seers and prophets have been the educators of mankind and their influence the dynamic principle of an evolving civilization. The first principle of any valid psychology is that man has capacity to transcend what we call human nature when he responds to the call of a higher type of being. In this call he realizes a new measure of possibility within himself, just as the possibility of the seed is fulfilled through the mysterious chemistry of the sun shining upon the earth in spring.

"Education," the Bahá'í writings testify, "is of three kinds; material, human, and spiritual. Material education is concerned with the progress and development of the body, through gaining its sustenance, its material comfort and ease. This education is common to animals and man. Human education signifies civilization and progress: that is to say, government, ad-

ministration, charitable works, trades, arts and handicrafts, sciences, great inventions and discoveries of physical laws, which are the activities essential to man as distinguished from the animal. Divine education is that of the Kingdom of God: it consists in acquiring divine perfections, and this is true education. . . .

"Then it is clear and evident that man needs an educator, and this educator must be unquestionably and indubitably perfect in all respects, and distinguished above all men."

"Though man has powers and outer senses in common with the animal, yet an extraordinary power exists in him of which the animal is bereft. The sciences, arts, inventions, trades, and discoveries of realities, are the results of this spiritual power. This is a power which encompasses all things, comprehends their realities, discovers all the hidden mysteries of beings."

This positive assertion is explained most clearly by the interpretation of the law of evolution found in the Bahá'í writings.

THE world of nature, according to the Bahá'í teaching, has three different kingdoms or classes of existence. The first kingdom includes the mineral, and the principle of this kingdom is cohesion. The second kingdom or class is that of the vegetable organisms, which show forth not only the principle of cohesion but also that of growth. The third kingdom of existence in nature is the animal world, and here we see operating a third principle, that of sense perception and sensibility. The world of mankind, while it is immersed in nature, and subject to the laws and principles which control the three lower kingdoms, is raised above nature by its possession of two powers or qualities not existing in mineral, vegetable or animal organisms. The first of these exclusively human attributes is that of rational intelligence. The mind of man, with its capacity to perceive and understand abstract and universal truths, is nothing else than supernatural.

This startling fact is proved when we bring to the evolution and process of matter the new and higher interpretation which the Bahá'í writings contain. While the older, materialistic theory insisted that matter of itself rises from kingdom to kingdom, until through finer structure or more intricate arrangement it produces the human intellect, the spiritual view replaces this theory by an explanation which corresponds to the actual facts. According to the Bahá'í philosophy, the elements never by their own force rise from one kingdom to a higher type of organism, but are taken up and assimilated into the higher organism by the higher organism itself. For example, the mineral elements are drawn up by the vegetable kingdom, and assimilated into that kingdom. The vegetable kingdom, in turn, is taken up and assimilated into the animal kingdom; and the elements of the animal kingdom are likewise raised by man and transmuted into the conditions of his physical organism. The process, therefore, is not controlled or motivated by any presumable mysterious power vested in the atom to build the higher forms of life, but by the inter-action of the

higher organism upon the lower. The materialistic view of matter declares to all intents and purposes that the scattered bricks of themselves come together and build the house, whose architecture the bricks are somehow or other supposed to know in advance!

This incredible assumption is destroyed by the true, spiritual teaching that the divine Architect fashioned the pattern of each kingdom of matter, and endowed each kingdom with special qualities and attributes. Just as the power of growth in the tree or plant transcends the qualities of the mineral, and just as the attribute of sense-perception in the animal transcends the qualities of the tree or plant, so is mind in man transcendent to all other existence in the natural world. It is a creation, a divine endowment and gift.

RATIONAL intelligence, however, while completely supernatural in comparison to the animal world, does not, in itself alone, constitute the unique mystery of the human kingdom. The second higher power of man is his capacity of faith—his capacity to recognize the Creator as utterly transcendent to himself, and to center his being upon devotion to the supreme Will. The sign of this power of faith is free will; for man alone, of all visible nature, is free to decide whether he shall live in the animal world of selfish sensibility, in the unregenerate human world of rational intelligence employed for personal or partisan ends, or in the spiritual world of unity, cooperation and impersonal love. The pull of nature within us is so constant and so strong or insidious that the human will cannot, unaided, raise up the mind and heart to the spiritual level. Unless there were a higher kingdom of reality above man, reaching down and inspiring the heart and mind with new energy and direction, human beings would be like a king in exile, an orphan in poverty and abandonment, able to glimpse a realm of peace and fulfilment but never able to attain.

This brief summary of man's place in nature, and his potential ability to live by spiritual rather than by natural law, culminates in the truth that the Creator has established a world of reality higher than man, just as He has created the kingdoms or orders lower than man. In the human being, the zenith of material perfection exists—the sum total of all the qualities and attributes developed in the lower realms. But man is likewise the beginning of spiritual perfection, the seed that must attain its fruitful growth and fulfilment in the qualities and attributes that yet lie enfolded in the narrow, dark husk of the physical self. Until we become conscious that a higher order truly exists, and is accessible to the aspiring soul within, we shall continue to regard man as nothing else than an animal who happens to possess the great instrument of intelligence for satisfying a mere animal desire.

Concerning the creative plan of God for human evolution Bahá'u'lláh has written: "Having created the world and all that liveth and moveth therein, He, through the direct operation of His unconstrained and sovereign Will, chose to confer upon man the unique distinction and capacity to

know Him and to love Him—a capacity that must needs be regarded as the generating impulse and the primary purpose underlying the whole of creation. . . . These energies with which the Day Star of divine bounty and Source of heavenly guidance hath endowed the reality of man lie, however, latent within him, even as the flame is hidden within the candle and the rays of light are potentially present in the lamp. The radiance of these energies may be obscured by worldly desires even as the light of the sun can be concealed within the dust and dross which cover the mirror."

Thus it is made clear that human beings remain subject to nature until they find a truth that will link them to the higher, spiritual world. "Through the Teachings of this Day Star of Truth, every man will develop until he . . . can manifest all the potential forces with which his inmost, true self hath been endowed."

PRAYER BEFORE DAWN

FLORA EMILY HOTTES

Let Thy Light shine, Beloved,
Let Thy Light shine;
We tread in earthly darkness,
Radiance is Thine.

We are so small a part
Of all Thou hast and art,
Glory Divine;
Empty of heart we yearn,
Empty of hand we turn
Unto Thy Shrine.
But entering lowly there,
Even afar, in prayer,
We feel Thy might;
And every void is filled,
Every doubt is stilled,
Each wrong made right.

Bring forth the Day, Beloved,
Banish our night,
On all our groping pathways
Send out Thy Light.

THE ONENESS OF RELIGION

DORIS McKAY

II.

THE COMING OF REVELATION

FOLLOWERS of Muhammad celebrate an event which they call "The Night of Power and Excellence" commemorative of the time when a Voice from heaven is said to have informed Muhammad of His prophetic mission. Every world religion has its equivalent tradition, its "night of power and excellence."

It is as if, at the beginning of each religious cycle, a Miracle Play has been, not acted, but lived. The theme, the order, and the characters are familiar—only the setting is each time new. There is an unnatural darkness before the curtain is thrown back: the time of darkness is of a tribe or of a world. Then the sequence. Someone (a forerunner, a crier in the wilderness) has had foreknowledge of a Promised One, a Messiah. There is a gifted and eloquent Youth; He becomes aware of His destiny; begins to teach, and to attract and glorify His disciples. Inevitably He is feared and persecuted by the world, which angrily tries to shake free of His insistant voice. After His going, somehow a nucleus remains to keep alive His Teachings until that Word takes hold in a portion of the world.

Perhaps the most breathless moment of this Drama is at the coming of Revelation—that moment when the Ancient of Days speaks to His chosen Messenger. Our human imagination lingers among the records of the ancient manuscripts. The Man chosen of God has been shaken as knowledge of His mission has overtaken Him. He cannot believe it is true; but it is true. An intimation deepens into certainty. He is to receive direct inspiration beyond the ability of even His own mind to encompass. God-possessed, He is to hear words not His own issuing from His lips. For this Youth has become host to the Ancient Beauty, with Whom He shall henceforth be consciously identified, Whose bidding He shall unquestioningly obey, for

Whom all His human qualities shall be crucified. Forever He shall leave His own pursuits and become a Shepherd of humanity.

THE Zoroastrian Gathas tell us that Zoroaster (who is believed by modern Parsis to have lived about 1600 B. C.) was awakened to His mission by a succession of seven visions. Then one night (so the legend goes) the Bactrian peasants, who had been praying for help to the Supreme Being, saw a mountain suddenly burst into flame. Since a boy in His teens Zoroaster (Zaratrustra) had lived in solitude in the lonely mountain retreats. Now in His flowing white robes He stood unscathed in the midst of the flames. Lit by the heavenly fire, they saw the Prophet descend from the mountain, bearing in one hand the sacred fire and in the other a rod, or wand, of cypress wood. We are not told what occurred on the mountain or what transpired in the heart of Zoroaster that He should have stepped from the life of a recluse right into the world, with the Word of God upon His lips, but of this initial experience we have reference in Zoroaster's own words:

"When first I received and became wise with Thy words,
When obedience came to me with the good mind—
Verily, O Wise Lord, I believed Thee to be
The Supreme Benevolent Providence."

Obedience to the vision took the form of acceptance of the divine Task as the next stanzas indicate—

"And though the task be difficult,
Though woe may come to me—
Thy message which Thou declarest to be best
I shall proclaim to all mankind."

THE Old Testament account of the coming of Revelation to Moses[1] is as follows:-

"The angel of the Eternal appeared to him in a flame of fire rising out of a thornbush. When he looked, there was the thornbush ablaze with fire yet not consumed! 'I will step aside,' said Moses 'and see this marvel, why the thornbush is not yet burned up.' God called to him out of the thornbush saying, 'Moses, Moses!' He answered 'Here I am!' And He said, 'Do not come close; remove your sandals from your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy ground.' He said 'I am the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.' "

The Ancient of Days, the I AM, according to the legend, outlined to Moses His Will for the rescue of the Israelites. Twice Moses spoke from His human plane, said "but",—

"But suppose they will not believe me, or listen to what I say; suppose they say, 'Eternal never appeared to you.' "

The Eternal showed Him two miracles and told Him what to do. Still hesitating Moses said, "But, Lord, I am no speaker, I have never been and am not now, not even since Thou hast spoken to Thy servant; I am slow of speech, I have no command of words."

And the Ancient of Days said to Moses, (and we can see the Bush

1—Moffatt translation.

blazing higher with these words):—

"Who gives man his mouth? Who makes one man deaf or dumb, who gives him his sight or makes him blind? Is it not I, the Eternal? Go then, I will be with your mouth and teach you what to say."

Moses still could not accept this, so the Eternal sent Aaron, of easy speech, with Him, and together they accomplished the release of the Israelites from the Egyptians.

JOHN, clad in his garment of camel's hair, preached to the people, "There cometh after me He that is mightier than I, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose."

When Jesus came from Galilee he asked John to baptize him. When the ceremony was completed and Jesus came out of the water "the heavens were opened unto him and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove and coming unto him; and lo, a voice out of the heavens saying 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.' "

After his forty days of prayer and struggle in the wilderness, Jesus returned "in the power of the Spirit" to Galilee and to His own town of Nazareth. Calling for the book of Isaiah He stood up in the synagogue and read:-

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me,
Because He anointed Me to preach good tidings to the poor:
He hath sent Me to proclaim release to captives,
And recovering of sight to the blind,
To set at liberty them that are bruised,
To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord."

Closing the book He said "Today hath this scripture been fulfilled in your ears."

WE have a closer picture of the coming of Revelation to Muhammad. Mount Hira, near Mecca, has been described as "a huge, barren rock, torn by clifts and hollow ravines, standing out solitary in the full white glare of the desert sun." This Rock or Mount was the Sinai of Muhammad. No Bush grew there to burn before His eyes while the Voice spoke, but here the celestial Visitor sought Him. He heard a Voice say "Cry" (recite). "What shall I cry?" Muhammad answered; and the Voice said "Cry in the Name of thy Lord." He thought He saw a vast, shadowy Presence and He fled down from the Mount toward Mecca.[2]

It is said that the people of the market place then saw Muhammad grow thin and ill. Shadowed by the superstitions of His time He thought He was possessed of a devil. Khadija, His wife, told Him that an angel had spoken. According to tradition she believed in Him before He believed in Himself. He went back and forth torn between the Mount and the town. One night he could bear it no more—He would hurl Himself from the cliff. But the angel, inexorable and mighty, stood there between Him and His suicidal leap, and the Voice spoke: "Thou art the Messenger of God, and I am Gabriel." Worn out in body and mind, the story tells us that Muhammad again sought refuge

2—The word Qur'an translated means literally, the *Crying*.

in His home, in Khadija. She wrapped His shivering human form in her cloak. But they were not alone even in the sanctuary of the familiar home, for the Presence of the Ancient of Days was there, as on the Mount. "O Thou, Who art wrapped" said the Voice, "rise up and preach, and magnify thy Lord, and thy raiment purify, and patiently wait for thy Lord."

Old Waraka, learned in prophecy, was the first to hear this from Khadija. "By the Lord" said the aged man, "He speaketh the truth. It is the beginning of Prophecy, and the great Law will soon come upon Him, as it did upon Moses."

THE Voice of Divine Inspiration spoke to Bahá'u'lláh far from the scenes of natural beauty that were a setting for the coming of Revelation to His Predecessors. He had been thrown with other followers of the Báb into a felon's dungeon in Tibran. The prison, called the Síyáh-Chál, (Black Pit), was fantastic in its horror. Chained by the neck to another prisoner, His feet in stocks, in icy darkness and in filth, Bahá'u'lláh waited weary weeks for release or death. We have His written testimony that the Spirit of Revelation penetrated to Him in this Gethsemane. He recounts that although the galling weight of the chains and loathsome atmosphere of the prison allowed Him but little sleep, still there were moments of slumber when He felt as if something were pouring like a mighty torrent over His breast. It was as if this celestial torrent were descending from the summit of a mountain to precipitate itself over the earth. "All My limbs seemed to have been set aflame," declared Bahá'u'lláh. "At such moments my tongue recited what mortal ears could not hear."

Then, as Bahá'u'lláh bears witness in His "Epistle to the Son of the Wolf": "One night in a dream this all-glorious word was heard from all sides: 'Verily, We will aid Thee to triumph by Thyself and by Thy pen. Grieve not for that which hath befallen Thee and have no fear. Truly Thou art of Them that are secure. Ere long shall the Lord send forth and reveal the treasures of the earth. Men will give Thee the victory by Thyself and by Thy Name, whereby the Lord hath revived the hearts of them that know!' "

In His "Discourse of the Temple" we find a like reference. "But when I saw myself at the culmination of calamity, I heard from above my head the most wonderful and melodious voice, and when I turned I witnessed a Maiden, (symbol of spiritual bestowal) of the celebration of the Name of My Lord, suspended in the air on a level with my head. . . . Then with her finger she pointed to my head, and addressed all those in heaven and earth saying: By God, this is the Beloved of the universe, but ye do not understand! This is the Beauty of God among you, and His Dominion within you, if ye are of those who know! This is the Mystery of God, His Treasure, the Command of God and His Glory, to those who are in the Kingdom of power and creation — if ye are of those who reason!"

In other references we find further

efforts to describe for us those moments of "Power and Excellence":

"God is My witness, O people! I was asleep on My couch, when lo, the Breeze of God wafting over Me aroused Me from My slumber, His quickening Spirit revived Me and My tongue was loosed to voice His Call. . . ."

"Whenever I chose to hold My peace and be still, lo, the voice of the Holy Spirit, standing on My right hand aroused Me, and the Supreme Spirit appeared before My face, and Gabriel over-shadowed Me, and the Spirit of Glory stirred within My bosom, bidding Me arise and break My silence."

Finally, we find Bahá'u'lláh in a rhapsody of evanescence before the Adored One:

"I have no will but Thy Will, O My Lord, and cherish no desire except Thy Desire. From My pen floweth only the summons which Thine own exalted Pen hath voiced, and My tongue uttereth naught save what the Most Great Spirit hath Itself proclaimed in the kingdom of Thine eternity. I am stirred by nothing else except the winds of Thy will, and breathe no word except the words which, by Thy leave and Thine inspiration, I am lead to pronounce."

The statements of Bahá'u'lláh set down within the last century have stepped outside the category of tradition. Critics of the source records of religion cannot say this is mere religious lore passed on and modified by generations of followers. Here is no mythology. In the literature of the Bahá'í Faith we have instead first-hand utterance through an inspired Pen of the mystery of the infusion of a human soul with the Spirit of Revelation. Was it true experience or delirium? Sufficient it is to those who call themselves Bahá'ís that the divine Power and the Ancient Wisdom should have remained vested in Bahá'u'lláh for a quarter of a century of unbroken Revelation, filling no less than a hundred volumes with the creative, living Word.

CLOUDS

IDA BAUM

I dreamt of heavy, hanging clouds last night:
My heart was filled with sunken ships of clay,
I pondered if this meant a coming fray
Until my body shook with awe and fright.
I called on God to give my spirit light
"Interpret this my dream in Thine own way,"
And in my heart of hearts a voice did say
"These darkened clouds will turn to colors bright."

O clouds! I know now what you symbolize,
We must destroy the old before we build
The new. Dictators' voices no more ring.
The mists have gone from man's near-sighted eyes
And now behold, on clouds, as God has willed
The True Messiah, Unity, reigns King.

THE BONDS

NORMAN F. MacGREGOR, JR.

There will be times, in the soft hush of night,
Before the dawn has flushed the sky with gray
That you will leave the flesh behind and soar,
In spiritual ecstasy, to realms
Undreampt of in the sobering light of day.
In vital moments, such as these, will come
The inspiration and the consciousness
That lies behind the gifts of man to men.
Perhaps, in these nocturnal wanderings
Our souls may meet on some celestial plane
And come to know the unity that binds
These many forces of the multiverse
Into an ordered system—one—complete.

Love must have bonds more binding far than flesh
That grow in strength as time moves on its way,
Else the keen edge of fear will split in twain
The feeble links that have their root in lust.
Such love is only found through faith in God,
And when that comes, with highest ecstasy,
The souls are held in an eternal grasp
To that unknown end that hath no end.

ISLAM

ALI-KULI KHAN

VI.

RAMADAN, 2 A.H.

A NEW day dawned on Islam with the Battle of Bedr. Having secured neutrality from the Arab tribes on the Mecca caravan road, Muhammad sent two scouts to Al-Haura, west of Medina, to secure information relative to Abu Sufyan and his caravan. The report was spread abroad, and reached Abu Sufyan near Syria. He sent a messenger to Koreish at Mecca to send a force to his aid. Meanwhile, Muhammad commanded an expedition consisting of about 300 souls including some who gained great renown in the future history of Islam.

On the 8th of January 623 A.D., Muhammad and His host marched from Mecca. At a fountain, they heard from some women that the caravan was expected to pass on the morrow or the day after. Abu Sufyan, hearing of Muhammad's scouts, hastened away, but on the road, he heard that an army from Mecca was about to arrive for his relief. That force debated as to whether to advance or withdraw; but it finally resolved to advance on Bedr.

Muhammad, too, was marching in search of the caravan; and after a council of war, He decided upon an offensive action. Encouraged by Muhammad's blessing and prayers, the Moslems marched without conpunction or fear, although they had learned that the enemy were about three times as strong, having 900 men who rode on 700 camels and 100 horses.

Luckily the caravan had escaped; for, otherwise, the Koreish would have united to save it and thus inflicted a defeat on the Moslems. As it was, Abu Jahl taunted them and prevented their final escape. In consequence they returned towards the Moslems to give battle. But hesitation and lack of harmony proved a cause of weakness. The armies came face to face. Three from Koreish invited Moslems to single combat. Two brothers, Sheiba and Atba, and Al-

Walid, still smarting from the taunts of Abu Jahl, advanced and defied three champions from the Moslems to meet them at single combat. At the call of Muhammad, Hamza, Obeida and Ali (all Hashemites) went forth, and the combat began.

In the short combat Al-Walid, the Koreish champion, was slain by the Sword of Ali. To avenge him, Atba went forth and Hamza slew him. The third, Sheiba, advanced in years, engaged Obeida, the Moslem veteran; and after an indecisive conflict in which Obeida was wounded, Hamza and Ali rushed and slew Sheiba with their swords.

The army's ranks began to close and the Moslem war-cry of: *"Ye conquerors, strike"* was raised. Extraordinary valor was shown on both sides; but the Koreish could not withstand the enthusiastic onrush of the Moslems. The day was stormy; "Gabriel with a thousand angels charging upon the foe" was seen by Muhammad in the piercing blast that swept through the valley. In the rage of the battle, the Prophet took a handful of gravel, cast it at the foe, shouting: "Confusion seize their faces!" The Koreish army was routed and put to flight, leaving 49 killed and as many prisoners. Of the Moslems, only 14 were killed.

The Meccan slain were some of Muhammad's bitterest enemies. These included Abu Jahl, who was killed by Mo'ath. The latter in turn was attacked by Ikrima, the son of Abu Jahl, and his arm nearly severed. As it interfered with his movements, Mo'ath pulled off the hanging arm with his feet and continued to fight. Such were the heroes of Bedr. When the head of Abu Jahl was thrown, gory, at the feet of the Prophet, He exclaimed: "This is more acceptable than the choicest camel in all Arabia."

Returning from Bedr, on the following day, as per custom the booty was divided as a common stock. These were: 115 camels, 14 horses, suits of armor, etc. Diversity of opinion as to each one's share was put an end to by the revelation of the Sura VIII, putting aside one-fifth "for God and the Prophet and for the orphans and the poor and the wayfarer." The rest was divided in equal shares amongst all, excepting that each horseman received two extra portions for his horse. Muhammad obtained the camel of Abu Jahl, and the famous sword, Dhu'l-Fikar (i.e. having two blades) was selected beyond His share in virtue of His prophetic dignity. This manner of division continued throughout all future occasions.

Muhammad sent Zeid and Abdullah, the poet, to Medina with the tidings of victory. The city was in rejoicing and even small children shouted: "Abu Jahl, the sinner, is slain!"

On reaching Medina, Muhammad's joy was turned into grief over the death of his daughter Rokeiya, who had died during His absence.

The prisoners were distributed amongst the Citizens and Refugees, who cared for them with kindness. This led them to become Moslems; wherefore, they were, at once, set at liberty. Many others were ransomed by the Meccans and the money was divided amongst the troops. The

name of the "Three Hundred" adorned the "Register of Omar," which was the greatest honor list and formed, in fact, the peerage of Islam. Sa'd, one of them, when four score years and about to die, asked to be buried in the garment in which he went forth to Bedr, and which he had laid up unto that day. For it was the highest badge of nobility. The victory greatly enhanced the prestige of Islam and was mentioned in the Qur'an, Sura VIII, as won by the help of "a thousand angels, in squadrons following one upon another." It was, besides, a "sign and a lesson unto the discerning people" (Sura III). The battle also proved that Satan was forced to abandon Koreish; Satan, who (Sura VIII—verse 49) had assured them that: "None shall prevail this day against you; for I, verily, am your confederate."

Besides Abu Jahl and other chiefs amongst the Koreish who were killed at Bedr, Abu Lahab, another of Muhammad's ruthless enemies, who was also his uncle, died in Mecca, where he had remained following the return of the fugitive army.

At Mecca, burning shame and thirst for revenge took the place of grief. They were all in consternation, and every house shed tears for the captive or the dead. They swore that they would not weep until they again waged war with Muhammad.

STRUGGLES WITH THE JEWS

Muhammad was (now) 56 years of age. The victory at Bedr produced a great effect on both the people of Medina and Mecca. They now began to see it a triumph of true faith over unbelief. Yet the "Disaffected" and the Jews were still an obstacle to be overcome. Asma, daughter of Merwan, chief of a disaffected tribe, who was a poetess, made a poem disparaging the "stranger," Muhammad. Omeir, a blind man and a zealous follower of the Prophet, repaired at night to Asma's house and slew her with a knife. Her son accused Omeir, who avowed the deed and threatened to massacre the entire tribe were they to repeat the act of Asma. The threat led to the conversion of the tribe to Islam, and thus a blood feud was averted.

Then a quarrel occurred with the Jews of the Abu Kainuka tribe whose settlement was blockaded. Since expected help from the "Disaffected" failed to arrive, the Jews surrendered at the discretion of Muhammad and were sent into exile. This was one month after the battle of Bedr. Another attack from Abu Sufyan and two hundred Meccans was repulsed and their host put to flight.

During the summer and autumn several expeditions were undertaken against the tribes east of Medina with success. The enemy, in one instance, were put to flight leaving a herd of 500 camels to the victors. A second expedition in June against Beni Ghatafan with 450 men from Nejd, was successful, and the enemy were defeated and scattered. Still another, at the head of 300 men, drove away Beni Soleim in the month of August. A caravan of Koreish was attacked in September and a booty amounting to 100,000 pieces was carried away. In that attack, Zeid obtained great

distinction, and from then on, became a renowned captain.

The struggle with the Jews continued with violence on both sides. Kab-ebn Ashraf, a Jewish chief, (who was a convert until Muhammad changed The Kibla from Jerusalem to the Ka'aba) went to Mecca to stir the Koreish against the Prophet. A zealous Moslem slew him and his tribe were put in a state of alarm. A new treaty was signed with them which removed their anxiety. Nevertheless, from that date the Jews lived in a state of depression and disquietude.

In 624 A. D. Fatima, Muhammad's favorite daughter from Khadja, was given in marriage to Ali. Since the Prophet had no living male issue, it was through Fatima that the Prophet's race, the famous Seiyids or nobility of Islam, was to be perpetuated. Ali was now five and twenty years old. His valor was demonstrated on the field of Bedr. He was gallant and endowed with real intellect, a warm heart and a devoted nature. From childhood he had served the Prophet with heart and soul. He had no ambition for worldly rank, and when later as Caliph he was made ruler of half the Muslim world, it was rather forced upon him than sought.

Fatima was then seventeen or eighteen. A year later, she gave birth to Al-Hasan (the future second Shi'ite Imam), the first grandson born to the Prophet; and in the following year was born Al-Hossein (the third Shi'ite Imam) who died a martyr on the field of Karbela.

In January 625 A. D. when Muhammad was 56 years of age, the Battle of Ohod was fought. Following their defeat at Bedr, the Koreish resolved to avenge themselves, and secretly prepared to attack Medina. The intimation to this effect was received by the Prophet through His uncle Al-Abbas, who reported that the Koreish were about to march at the head of 3,000 strong. They did march in January with that strong force which included 300 mailed warriors and 200 well mounted cavalry. They were reinforced by 100 men from At Ta'if. They took the route by the seashore, and after ten days reached within five miles to the west of Medina.

BATTLE OF OHOD

Muhammad called the Moslems to the Great Mosque and after much deliberation it was resolved that they remain within the city. This resolution was made as a consequence of a dream in which Muhammad was clad in mail and rode on a ram, when suddenly the point of his sword was broken and a steer was slaughtered in his sight. He interpreted the breaking of the sword to portend a harm to himself, and the slaughter of a steer some damage to the people, the riding upon the ram as carnage amongst the enemy and the secure coat of mail to be Medina fortified and safe.

The younger Moslems, however, were not pleased, and stated indignantly that such a course would be a disgrace to their valor. Thus Muhammad ordered a march out of the city to meet the enemy, and himself retired with Abu Bekr and Omar to prepare for war. He put on his armor

and rode at the head of his men towards Ohod, where He halted for the night.

At dawn the army of Medina, 1000 strong, moved onward and drew up the line of battle. Abdallah O'bei, who was displeased with the change of the first decision, returned to Medina with his 300 followers. Muhammad was thus left with 700, of whom only 100 were clad in mail; but these men in their belief that they fought in the path of God, boldly faced an enemy four times their number. Muhammad arranged His forces forbidding them to attack till He gave the command; and having put on a second coat of mail, He calmly awaited the enemy.

Then the Meccan army advanced, led by Abu Sufyan, Khalid, Akram and others, while the famous general, Amr ibn al'As, commanded the horse.

The battle opened with single combat, followed by mass struggle in which Muhammad's under lip was wounded and one of His front teeth lost, and although He showed great valor, His forces fled, and Mus'ab was slain. Another blow drove the ring of his helmet into his cheek and made a gash in his forehead. A cry was raised that Muhammad was slain; but He was only stunned and later took refuge behind the rocks of Ohod. While the blood was being washed off His face, He cried out a curse upon those "who besprinkled the face of God's apostle with blood." His curse "O Lord! Let not a year pass over them alive," was fulfilled. For "none of those that shot at him survived beyond the year."

In this battle, the brave Hamza was slain; and after the enemy had departed, seventy-four corpses of the army of Medina were found on the battle-field. When the news reached Medina, the "Disaffected" rejoiced and even talked of sending an embassy to Abu Sufyan.

The wounds of Muhammad were dressed and Safia mourned the death of her brother Hamza. To comfort her, the Prophet stated that Hamza's soul was already enrolled in Paradise. After praying over the dead and performing their obsequies, He mounted his horse and entered Medina.

The Koreish at first thought of attacking Medina; but after hesitation they returned to Mecca. Muhammad proclaimed that the city was to prepare for the pursuit of Koreish, but after advancing for a distance, they resolved to return to Medina.

The Martyrs of Ohod have been immortalized with a halo of glory in the blessing which Muhammad conferred in mentioning them. But in the eye of Medina and Mecca the prestige of Islam suffered from that defeat. However, Muhammad used it as an object lesson to the Moslems and justly attributed it to the disobedience and rebellious spirit of those who refused to abide by His original decision to remain in the city.

One of the indirect consequences of the Battle of Ohod was the revelation of the law of female inheritance. Sa'd was slain at Ohod. His wife, grief-stricken, invited the Prophet to a feast, and while there appealed to Him in the name of her two daughters, who had been left portionless, for Sa'd's brother had taken over the whole of the martyr's property.

The Prophet promised redress, and while surrounded by His companions, He showed the signs of inspiration and drops of sweat fell from His forehead. Then He summoned into His presence Sa'd's brother and widow, addressing him thus: "Restore unto Sa'd's daughters two-thirds of his property, and one-eighth part unto his widow." The overjoyed widow praised God.

SCATTERING OF JEWS

The Koreish were elated by their victory at Ohod. The first few months after the battle passed in quiet. But with the opening of the fourth year of Hegira (A. D. 625) Muhammad received from various sources word that groups were being assembled against Him. Toleiha, chief of Beni Assad tribe, had amassed a strong force to attack Medina. Muhammad sent 100 men, Citizens and Refugees, by indirect routes to encounter the invaders. They performed their mission with success, having dispersed the enemy and returned with the booty to Medina.

In the following month, Muhammad despatched six of his followers towards Mecca for various purposes. These were treacherously surrounded by enemy tribes on the way. Three of them died fighting and the other three were bound as prisoners to be sold at Mecca. They were purchased by the sons of two Koreish chiefs slain at Bedr, and after the month of Safar, they were put to death. Their names were Zeid and Khobeih, two martyrs to Islam.

One month later, another Muslim party were waylaid and slain, their bodies being cut to pieces. Muhammad's grief was intense, and He invoked God's punishment upon the murderers, who were of the Beni Amir tribe. To prevent a recurrence of such calamity, Muhammad ordered the Jewish tribe, Beni au-Nadir, confederates of Beni Amir, into exile, requiring that they leave His land within ten days.

In spanning the exile of the Beni an-Nadir, He extended the policy of scattering the various hostile Jewish tribes, and thus assuring the security of Medina and her people. The victory over the latter tribe proved of great importance, as is revealed in the Qur'an, Sura LIX. The fire of eloquence aglow in the Qur'an is particularly manifest in this Sura, which closes with the following glorious peroration:—

"He is the Lord. Beside Him there is no God. It is He that knoweth both the seen and the unseen. The Merciful, the Compassionate. There is no God but He; the King, the Holy, the Giver of Peace, the Faithful, the Guardian, the Glorious, the Almighty, the Most High. Far exalted is the Lord above that which they associate with Him,—God the Creator, the Maker, the Framer. Most goodly are His names. All that is in the heavens and in the earth praiseth Him. He is the Glorious, the Wise."

As is well known, Muhammad was unlettered. Hitherto He had employed Jewish amanuenses in writing despatches in Hebrew and Syriac tongues. Now that relations were severed with the Jews, Muhammad had his "son" Zeid study those lan-

guages and act as His scribe. Zeid had already mastered the Arabic writing under one of the Bedr prisoners, and these two other languages added to his qualifications. The same Zeid was ordered by Caliph Abu Bekr, and later by Caliph Osman, to compile the scattered fragments of the revealed verses into the Qur'anic form, which has continued to this day.

Between 625 A. D. and 626, at the age of 57-58, Muhammad marched again to Bedr; but the Koreish remained at Mecca. In fact they had at first advanced from Mecca with 2000 foot and 50 horse; but after a few days, the scarcity of provender forced them back. As the people of Medina heard the news, they were alarmed and appeared disinclined to meet the enemy. But Muhammad announced that if cowardice held them back, He alone would march. His boldness raised the people's spirits and as many as 1500 men rallied around him; and they marched taking with them a large supply of goods to barter at the Fair. As the Koreish retreated, the "second Bedr" proved of benefit to the Medina people, who traded their goods to advantage and returned home. At this triumph the Koreish became mortified, while Medina enjoyed a respite.

Early in the fifth year, A. D., Muhammad with a party of 400 men set out to disperse certain tribes. At his approach, the tribes fled to the mountains.

During the summer, a prevailing famine forced marauding bands between the Red Sea and on the borders of Syria to march and threaten Medina itself. Muhammad undertook a campaign against them at Duma, and after driving them away, the Moslems returned to Medina with the enemy's herds which grazed nearby.

In those days, the Sura XXXIII was revealed, enjoining veil for woman and prohibiting men to see a Moslem's wives unveiled or to marry any of them after his death. Thus it became a custom for women to be partly veiled when walking abroad. Likewise verses were revealed prohibiting Moslems to enter any one's house without invitation or previous permission.

A few months after His return from Duma, He heard of the rising of the Beni Mustalik, once a friendly tribe, with a view of joining Koreish on a projected attack on Medina. Muhammad attacked them and took many captives. The enemy's casualties were ten killed; the booty consisted of 200 families made captive, of 2000 camels, 5000 sheep and goats, besides much household goods.

(*To be continued*)

YOUTH AND THE WORLD

KENNETH CHRISTIAN

THE modern world is ideally designed for children. Most of the customs and institutions called adult are, on critical inspection, mere copies of childhood practices. The attainment by the individual of physical or legal maturity does not mean entrance into a mature world. It means merely that the world of childhood, in its ideals and most of its practice, has been subtly carried over into the world of "grown-ups."

Children consider the harboring of grudges natural. Modern governments perpetuate past hatreds between peoples in order to preserve the fiction of national sovereignty. The old religious organizations perpetuate the sense of smug pity for the poor pagans and the misguided (i.e. those who see things a bit differently). . . . Children do not seek justice, but the attainment of their own desires. And this they soon find may be quite easily accomplished by ganging up or by "demanding" something. Modern governments resolve into a contest between pressure groups. The struggle may terminate in the triumph of one group and the ruthless suppression of all others. Or the struggle may be marked by breathing spells of temporary compromise. But justice and the good of the people is never the primary object. . . . Children delight in deliberate make-believe. Adults delight in deliberate make-believe, but adults mix the make-believe with fact and perpetuate all of it as truth. The fictions and falsities that surround religious ceremonial and history, the make-believe of "the chosen people," perpetuated by religions and governments alike, the lies constantly associated with any form of intolerance, the false superiority constantly striven for by all types of fraternal and social groups — and the gaudy uniforms, banners, purple plumes which mark this struggle for superiority—all these are examples from the world called adult. Many more clear contrasts of childish action could be mentioned. A careful analysis of child life and activity compared with the life of the

modern adult will suggest much interesting evidence.

A SCIENTIFIC GENERATION

Into such a society is coming to maturity a generation of young folk who have greater training in science and the value of fact than any previous generation, and who are disillusioned by the achievements of the adult world.

Modern youth sense that they belong to a lost generation. They see society as afflicted by economic and political earthquakes, whose tremors keep life in a constant turmoil and whose severe shocks are terrifying and unpredictable. Modern society practically guarantees that the finest young men of each generation will suffer the blight of war. As a result, the present, lost generation sees no basis for security in life and little reasonable hope for the future. The world is hostile to youth in the sense that it is designed for the childish and the dead, from patterns called sacred because of their antiquity.

Consciously and unconsciously, youth is repudiating the historic culture as a worthless birthright. This repudiation has caused two popular alternatives to be taken. The first has been a world-wide series of nationalistic youth movements. These popular surges, military and semi-military in character, are efforts to destroy the hold of a past culture by building newer and greater nations. The fallacy involved lies in the effort to perpetuate the complete sovereignty of the individual state in the face of the inexorable march of science and economics toward the international state. Bitter must be the inevitable reaction of youth when the betrayal by militant nationalism is complete.

The other alternative is the ancient path of forgetfulness. It is now trod by the cynic, the atheist, and the blasé. We might well call it the "jitterbug" attitude. The "jitterbug" delights in discordant rhythms devoid of natural grace. It is a return to the primitive in dancing. There is a similarity in its popularity to the return to childish mentality made by the adult who refuses to face harsh realities in life. Certain youth in every age have substituted the philosophy of constant merriment for the assumption of mature life responsibilities. And the devotees of irresponsible pleasure face the inheritance of spiritual, mental, and sometimes physical gout.

Either alternative mentioned does not lead to a solution of youth's dilemma.

THE NEWNESS OF LIFE

Yet a most hopeful sign is the constant emphasis on the newness of life. Slowly there is sinking into the subconscious minds of modern people the fact that we are living in a new world. One of the great contributions of science to the education of youth is the training in accuracy and the value of fact versus fiction. Social science and the study of world history is creating increased awareness of the need for social justice. And all the forces of modern life encourage the ability to think in ever-larger terms. We may safely conclude that the sweep of modern life will continue youth's repudiation of the historic

culture.

Modern youth are forced to realize that the awareness of a new world has not created unity of purpose nor caused the evolution of an all-embracing plan of society. Youth face the difficulty of trying to understand, and live happily in, a world for which they have not been prepared by education. Modern colleges prepare youth for the childish culture that fostered, promoted and blessed the Great War. Education, like formal religion, tends to preserve, reverently, the outworn.

The older generation views with alarm (as older generations always do) the increasing chasm between themselves and their off-spring. So they strive desperately to perpetuate absolute allegiance to the old culture. Youth, moved by the spirit of the age, finds itself divided from its elders, and also divided into false racial, political, religious, and social strata. Youth have no true social philosophy, universal in all aspects.

Herein lies the challenge of the Bahá'í Faith and its program of World Order. Bahá'u'lláh offers a world program of social justice, universal and comprehensive in its application to the life of man. Bahá'u'lláh specifically urges man to free himself from the fictions and fetters of the past. He has made primary what religionists have never before dared. First, Bahá'u'lláh declares that true science and true religion cannot be in conflict, but the imaginings of men stray far from the path of fact and truth. Second, Baha'u'lláh has urged for each individual the independent investigation of truth, in all matters religious especially. The new age must repudiate the sanction of antiquity. . . . These steps the ecclesiastics of the world would not dare take, for the falsities of theology and ancient custom would then become all too apparent to the masses of the people.

A DIVINE PLAN

Bahá'u'lláh, from a prison cell, and during the years 1863-92, presented a divine plan for world civilization. But unlike the overwhelming majority of thinkers, He saw the world as a single organism, of blended national units—not of independent, sovereign cells. He saw life, not as dominated by politics, or economic theory, or religious-social forces, but as a fusion of all these elements and as subject to the laws of growth and decay, operating as inexorably as they do in the physical kingdoms.

The teachings of Bahá'u'lláh meet the need of modern society and of modern man. Bahá'u'lláh foresaw a world truly mature, freed from the inhibitions and vagaries of childhood. To all folk, young and old alike, the Bahá'í Faith offers illumination of the past and the present, and teaches the way of maturity to all individuals seeking the establishment of justice and order in the world of humanity.

The fifth article in a symposium on the subject of The World Outlook.

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